

[Mr. George Ogden]

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Life History?

FOLKLORE,

Miss Effie Cowan,

McLennan County, Texas,

District 8.

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Page NO. 1

No. of Words

Reference;

“Interview NO. 2 with Mr George Ogden, White Pioneer, Marlin, Texas.

“On the first day of March 1872 I crossed the Red River into Texas on Colberts Ferry, near the present town of Sherman, and from there to Jacksboro. At that time it was called Fort Jack. I was on my way to the upper plains but decided against this trip and turned back to Dallas. There was no railroad between Dallas and the Indian erritory Territory then, but the Texas Central was in five miles of Dallas coming in from the south. The Court house at Dallas was under construction and was up one story. The streets and sidewalks were of planks for just a few blocks in the business section.

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"The streets did not even have cobble-stones, just plain black land , and in rainy weather the mud-holes were so bad that the wagons could hardly get thro'. There are no first class hotels and only about three thousand inhabitants in the city. I left Dallas after spending a few [?] days and came to the town of what is now [Waxabachie?]. Here I secured work with a company contracting to build Bois-De-Arc hedges which were used as fences. The hedges were not practical , as they caused the ground to become sterile for many yards on each side of the fence, so when the barb wire came in this took the place of the Bois-De-Arc hedge [fence?].

"To go back a little , when I came thro' the Territory I started to walk, but the Overland Transit trains of about thirty wagons overtook us and gave me and my companion a free ride in return for our service in camp. C.12 - 2/11/41 - Texas 2 After travelling with the train for only three days we came on ahead on foot as we made better time that way. These wagon trains were engaged in carrying frgt freight to Texas towns and government posts from up in Missouri, where it was taken from the boats on the rivers and transferred to these wagon trains. There were from six to eight mus mules to a train, and in crossing the rivers where the banks were steep , the teams were taken from other wagons and doubled up to pull the wagon thro' the beds of the rivers and up the banks.

"My next stop was at Stephenville in Erath County, I waded the Brazos river at old Fort Graham, seven miles west of Stephenville. I hired to a cattleman to help in the round-up to gather 4000 head of yearlings and two year olds to be driven to the market. Before the grass had sufficient growth to fatten them we worked about three weeks, and had a hundred ponies being [ut?] shape for the drive to the market up North.

"We drove them over the old Chisolm Trail by way of Medicine Lodge, now called Dodge City. When the Cattle were herded at night and the camp struck, the cowboys would ride around the herd all night to keep them from stampeding. All thro' the night we would sing

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the songs of the trail. "The dust hangs thick upon the trail, And the horns and the hoofs are clashing, While off at the side thro' the chaparral, The men and the stays go crashing " .

"The above often happened and the cowboys would let the herd drift in the direction which they were being driven. 3 "When we reached the end of the drive we were paid off, and as most of the boys were paid off and ready to celebrate the end of a long hard drive. After they began to ship by train some-times it took about two [we ks?] to get a herd thro' to the market. The cattle were shipped first to Abilene Kansas. Then when the Atchison, Topeka and Santa Fe was built to Ft Dodge this was nearer and became a new shipping point.

"When I returned to the staked plains from this trip the cowboys would scatter in every direction. We would hire to another man to help to drive his herds and this time I hired to Jack Wilkerson who had a large ranch. The ranch house was between San Saba and Menardville situated on the river and was a block house. There were 35 men on this and the adjoining ranch and they camped in the bunk house together for protection against the Indians , [s?] the Indians still would steal away from their reservations and make raids on the white mens stock they . They had about quit their murdering the whites by this time, but still stole horses and cattle.

"After becomng becoming tired of the ranch life I went to work for the Star mail rout which handled the mail for Texas, New Mexico, Utah and Colorado. My route was in Texas where I helped to harvest the wild grass and to put the hay up at the stage stops which was kept to feed [te?] horses which was driven to the old Concordia stage. These coaches [di?] not have springs but the bodies of the coach were hung to the running gear by leather straps of several ply's thickness, and for that day and time these coaches were great luxury with their 4 railing which ran around the top for the baggage, with the drivers seat on top. There wad always a detail of two soldiers who rode with the driver for his protection against robbers and Indians. the The coach was ull pulled by [??] from four to six horses and always driven in a lope. Many a silent monument to these old stage lines are written in

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the blood [?] of those brave stage drivers and their passengers, for even in this late day at the dawn of the railroads the stage robbery was a common occurrence.

"In this work of stocking the stations with feed-stuff, my work began at Eredericksburg and we worked in the direction of El Paso. This took as thro' Loyal Valley, Fort Mason, Kickapoo Springs, Concho and Fort Stockton. In harvesting this hay we were supplied with ten regular soldiers for guards who kept a watch for robbers or Indians while we worked. We bought some wheat from some Germans at Loyal Valley to place at the stage stops, as the wild grass had died out from a drouth. In many places there were from 16 to 20 men working and we used [sme?] grammar grass, this grass was very hard to cut so we used hoes instead of the sickles and mower's. There were many Indian mnds mounds in this section.

"We had some trouble with the Indians here. They would hide in the brush and chase those who went into he the town, among them was a young man who out-ran them, but the men in the saloons made fun of him, and called him a coward, this resulted in a shooting and the young man who has escaped from the Indian's was killed. I saw this man killed. 5 "While we were putting this wheat up for the stage stops, there were German families here and they too, were putting theirs up. hile While they were working they kept their guns lying close by to be ready for the Indians as they were very bad that summer making raids on the settlements. About two weeks later while we were at Kickapoo Spring we met a band of Indians, but saw them in time to form a corral in a circle around our stock. The Indians circled around this corral of wagons, but as [?] they found no opening they galloped away. After trying to find an / opening several times. When we reached Kickapoo Springs we camped in the stone house with the corral around it.

"On our way we passed an overland train of Mexicans in ox-carts, they camped on the creek and that night they turned their oxen out to graze, that night the Mexicans were attacked by the Indians, and we felt this attack was intended for us, as they no doubt did not know we had reached the fort. When we heard the fight the soldiers in the fort took

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us with them and we attacked the Indians which resulted in them breaking and fleeing. I remember a humorous incident happening at this fight. The Mexicans carried tar and one had a bucket hanging in a tree over his cart, he was hid under the tree and when they were fighting one of the Indians bullet's struck the bucket of tar and it emptied on the Mexican's head, giving him a tar baptizing. It was difficult to tell if he was a negro or Mexican. These Indians had slipped away from the reservation and were making raids to replenish their provisions and capture stock. An Indian never worked if he could help it, especially if he could secure provisions in [?] raids . 6 "The Star Line stage had its headquarters at Austin, by reason at that time of its being the farthest railroad to the southwest in the state . The population was around eight or ten thousand people. This was when the negroes were in their glory holding office, acting as guards, janitor janitor's at the capitol, when Davis power was still in force with the carpet-baggers. Altho' a northern man my sympathies were with the white man.

"When I left Austin I went to Houston, this town had about 1500 inhabitants. The lumber industry here was among the largest in the South. The East Texas saw-mills sent their lumber to Houston and from there it was sent by boat, rail and wagon train to points North, and all over the interior of Texas. Also out of the state as there were three railroads into Houston at that time, The Southern Pacific, the H & T. C. (both branches.) I left Houston in 1878 and came to Hoakley Texas, here I spent several years and married Miss Lizzie Simmons on the 6th day of Dec. 1876.

"I then came to Falls county between Xmas and New Years of the year 1876 and settled at Cedar Springs, 10 miles southwest of Marlin, Texas, This was on the West side of the Brazos river. There were plantations on the river bottoms and small settlements on the prairie. It was about this time that it was found that the prairies were tillable. Previous to this all the farms were along the river, and the general idea was that the prairie range was only good for a stock country. After they made a few good crops on the prairie then the

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free range was a thing 7 of the past. The settlers coming in fast and buying all the land to be had in this section.

“When I came to Cedar Springs in 1876 there was a church and school combined. This was built of box lumber, taking the place of the old log school house that had recently burned . The store and gin was owned by Ben Pierson and his cousin Matt Jones. We received our mail from Marlin. Any one in the community who happened to be in Marlin would bring the mail out and the same way in sending it in by any one who happened to be going. This was once or twice a week and we all met at the store to deposit outgoing mail and to receive what came in to us.

“Some of the early settlers that I remember were Dr Bell, who lived in the village of Cedar Springs and was our doctor. John Powers of the firm of Beal and Powers cattlemen. Another Powers family who were cousins in the Blue Ridge settlement and who were among the organizers of Falls county. Dr Adkins. Dr Priest who lived in the settlement now known as Lott and Rosebud, and a family of Perkins and the constable by name of Ratliff, and some German families. This was close to the neighborhood of the Morgan and Marlin family massacres, now known as Morgans Point . There is a legend of money buried at Morgans Point, but none has been found altho' many treasure hunters have dug for it here.

“To the east of the Brazos river and what is now the town of Perry, was the Stamps settlement whose founder was Mr Holse, a German emigrant. He owned a store and had the postoffice in his store. When I left the Perry settlement I moved further east between Big Creek and Brushy, this settlement known as Spanky Flat. 8 “When the International and Great Northern railroad came thro' this section and passed thro' our community they named it Otto, after one of the pioneer German emigrants. I organized a school near this [town?] prior to the coming of the railroad and we called it Eureka, later on there was a postoffice and it was called Ogden for myself, but when the town of Otto was built on

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the railroad the post office a Ogden was discontinued as the town of Otto built up and the families moved to it.

“While I was living at Spunky Flat, (between Brushy and Big Creek,) I owned and operated a gin. the The Eli Whitney gin had not been improved. I had trouble in removing the lint from the saws by brushes, so the idea came to me of the possibility of removing the lint by drafts of air, this draft to be in the same direction as the revolution of the saws. Having my saws filed in the idle season, I stripped the top of the gin stand and revealed the relation of the brush to the saws by certian means of generating the air and conducting it to an open chamber thro' an open slot situated over the sawe saw and a blast of air was directed over the saws which cleaned them of the lint.

“We developed this idea and I had the air blast upon the saws tried out and then had the invention patented, afterwards sold the patent to a Co. of manufacturers. By this time the cotton had become the main [?] crop and the ranches almost a thing of the past. The gins were being built over the communities to take care of the cotton which was raised in increasing quantities. My gin was on the Grosbeck road out of Marlin. It was in the Seay and Watters communities. 9 “To the east of Otto was what was known as the Mettina settlement. This was where Von Molwegg bought 3200 acres of land and settled German immigrants on it, selling it to them on time. He made a number of trips bck nd back and forth to the old country and would bring some with him on each trip, among them was his body guard in ermany Germany to who whom he gave a nice tract of land in this settlment. There were the Lange's, the Hoodenlacher's, Ed and enry Henry Schneider, Khane, and in the Spunky Flat communities, the Criswell's, the Seay's, the [atters?], Wires , Gill, Oakes, Watts, McDonald's, [Redrick?], Deans, Hastings, Rogers, Partons, Adams, Phillips, McClanahan, Bartons, Myers, Smith, McDaniel, Durhams, Powers, & [?] Reeds (who owned 1700 acres of land.)

“Between Marlin and Cedar rings Springs there were the Roberts, the Glass family, Byers, and Gerald, the widow Greer, the Maxwells and Asberry's. When I lived near erry Perry

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there were the Shultz, Bletch. and the Swede Brot Brother's Hunt and Ole Olson, also Phil Radle who owned a saloon. The County Judge of Falls county in 1876 was Judge Stewart, Ben Rice the County Attorney and the lawyers were McDonald, Oltorf, Ring, and Gameson.

"The court house was located at the present site, but was condemned and torn down and in 1884 the present one was built, I understand it has recently been condemned and a new one to be built. My wife , Elizabeth , died in 1934 and my children who are living are John R. Marlin : Mrs George Rhodes, who lives in California : Mrs Savioz, Harris County : Walter, Fayette County. 10 "When the barb wire came in the free range played out and almost the whole country was turned into farming. The first car load of wire came to Marlin in 1879 and the rail-road agent had a-hard time getting any one to take the agency. After a long parley he finally induced Mr Barelayt, of the firm of Barclay Hardware Company to take the agency. He refused to have anything to do with the wire unless the railroad company bore the expense, but in a week the first car had been sold and four more cars were asked for, after this the wire was sold faster then it could be delivered. The first car reached Marlin in the summer of 1879 and I bought three spools from this car and used it for water gaps to hold my cattle.

"After living in Falls county for 18 years I sold [?] my 100 acre farm, and moved to Mexico and lived there 12 years. I bought several hundred acres of fine virgin forest and it was a perfect jungle, but I cut the dense timber and sold it and ut put five hundred acres in tame grass for pasture for my stock, and on this I placed pure bred cattle. This was 100 miles of Tampico, latitude 22 North. I established a profitable business and the buyers came to my place to buy my stock.

"In about the year 1910 the revolution Id led by Villa broke out against President Dias and I still rospered prospered for two or three years. Finally both faction of soldiers on each side began to lect me alike, helping themselves to my stock or anything they saw fit to take. The neighbors were high class Mexicans and Spaniards and understood

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that I took a neutral stand and sympathized ith with me. The Spaniards were called "rancheroes" . Later there was considerable fighting between the soldiers and 11 and the revolutionists, and we could hear the guns a mile away at the town of San Jose. There were 34 revolutionist killed, who were taken by sprise surprise by Madero's army against / Pancho Villa. The dead were killed in San Jose and burned, then the retreat began. they They passed thro' my yard and my family had to stay in the house to keep from being run over by Villa's men. Two hours after pssing passing thro' my yard there was another attack by the regular soldiers on Villa and 15 or 20 more were killed. The dead were left this time on the highway in their hasty retreat and a as [?] me went to town we became used to seing seeing the bodies an and skeletons of dead soldiers.

"We ere were allowed perfect freedom to go to market by both factions, Guerrero was our nearest station to [?] board the train, this was 20 miles by land and [65?] by water, our transportation was by boat u th up the Kiam and Coy rivers and by wagon train by land. The condition of Americans in Mexico became so bad that the President of the United States ordered us out. The day before we left we ere were looted by Villa's army / of 3000 soldiers. They camped in my yard and butchered 16 of my finest milch cows , and / very courteously offered me the choicest part for my table :

"During these years my boys were being continually arrested by both factions and accused of taking sides ith with the other. When e we left and were within thirty miles of Tampico we [?] boarded the train. Our transportation was furnished by the Mexican government, but in return we had to give the government our wagons and teams. All we were allowed to bring out was our bedding and fourteen trunks. There ere were four families. pioneering ioneering in oklahoma and Texas was [????]